

## Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01  
INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15  
ICA-11 HA-05 /085 W  
-----105879 251037Z /21

P R 242100Z AUG 78  
FM AMEMBASSY BRASILIA  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8762  
INFO AMCONSUL RIO DE JANEIRO  
AMCONSUL SAO PAULO  
AMEMBASSY ASUNCION  
AMEMBASSY BOGOTA  
AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES  
AMEMBASSY CARACAS  
AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN  
AMEMBASSY LA PAZ  
AMEMBASSY LIMA  
AMEMBASSY LISBON  
AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO  
AMEMBASSY QUITO  
AMEMBASSY PARAMARIBO  
AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 BRASILIA 6680

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PINT, BR  
SUBJECT: AN ALTERNATE PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDACY

REF: BRASILIA 4239

1. SUMMARY. THE MDB AGUSUT 23 NOMINATED RETIRED GENERAL EULER BENTES MONTEIRO AND MDB SENATE LEADER PAULO BROSSARD AS PARTY'S CANDIDATES FOR PRESIDENT AND VICE PRESIDENT IN OCTOBER 15 INDIRECT PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION. ALTHOUGH EULER'S CHANCES OF BEATING ARENA CANDIDATE FIGUEIREDO IN ELECTORAL  
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COLLEGE VOTE ARE, AT THIS POINT, MINIMAL AT BEST, HIS NOMINATION MARKS FIRST TIME SINCE 1964 REVOLUTION THAT OFFICIAL CANDIDATE WILL HAVE FACED FORMAL OPPOSITION BOTH OF HUSTINGS AND IN ELECTORAL COLLEGE AND, FOR THAT MATTER, FIRST TIME SINCE DIRECT, POPULAR ELECTION OF JANIO QUADROS IN 1960 THAT BRAZIL HAS FIELDDED CONTENDING PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES.

IN MODERATE ACCEPTANCE SPEECH, BENTES MONTEIRO PROMISED POLITICAL AMNESTY (ALTHOUGH HE DID NOT SPECIFY WHETHER TOTAL OR PARTIAL), RETURN TO 1967 CONSTITUTION AND, EVENTUALLY, "REESTABLISHMENT OF DEMOCRATIC STATE OF LAW...THROUGH NATIONAL CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY". HALF OF HIS SPEECH DEALT WITH ECONOMIC MATTERS; HE PLEDGED EFFORT TO CORRECT "TWO EQUALLY GRAVE DISTORTIONS": BRAZIL'S "DEPENDENCE" ON FOREIGN CAPITAL AND IMBALANCE CREATED BY CONCENTRATION OF ECONOMIC POWER. END SUMMARY.

2. NOTWITHSTANDING THE OPPOSITON OF A LARGE SEGMENT OF THE PARTY (INCLUDING SOME OF ITS TOP LEADERSHIP), THE MDB AUGUST 23 NOMINATED RETIRED FOUR-STAR GENERAL EULER BENTES MONTEIRO AND MDB SENATE LEADER PAULO BROSSARD (RIO GRANDE DO SUL) AS THE PARTY'S CANDIDATES FOR PRESIDENT AND VICE PRESIDENT IN THE OCTOBER 15 INDIRECT PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION. DELEGATES CASTING 484 OF A TOTAL OF 607 VOTES PARTICIPATED IN THE CONVENTION (SOME DELEGATES CAN CAST UP TO THREE VOTES). OF THE 484 VOTES CAST, 352 WERE FOR EULER, 107 AGAINST AND 25 WERE BLANK. THE CONVENTION EARLIER CAST AN ALMOST IDENTICAL VOTE IN FAVOR OF NOMINATING A CANDIDATE.

3. EULER'S CHANCES OF BEATING ARENA CANDIDATE FIGUEIREDO ARE, AT THIS POINT, MINIMAL AT BEST AND, CONFIDENTIAL

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AT WORST, MATHEMATICALLY IMPOSSIBLE. ARENA HAS A 130 VOTE ADVANTAGE IN THE ELECTORAL COLLEGE (361 TO 231). TO WIN, EULER WOULD NEED EVERY MDB VOTE PLUS 66 ARENA VOTES...A MOST UNLIKELY PROSPECT WITH THE ELECTION LESS THAN TWO MONTHS AWAY, ESPECIALLY WHEN TAKING INTO ACCOUNT: (A) THE DEEP SPLITS WITHIN THE MDB (E.G., 26 VOTES AGAINST EULER WERE FROM CHAGAS FREITAS' RIO DE JANEIRO CONTINGENT--SEE RIO'S 2603); AND (B) THE HARD WORK FIGUEIREDO AND THE REGIME ARE DOING WITH ACTUAL AND POTENTIAL ARENA DISSIDENTS. THERE IS, FOR INSTANCE, CONSIDERABLE INFORMED SPECULATION CONCERNING A DEAL IN THE MAKING BETWEEN FIGUEIREDO AND ARENA'S MASTER DISSIDENT--SENATOR MAGALHAES PINTO, WHOSE PROSPECTS AS THE LEADER OF ONE OF THE NEW POLITICAL PARTIES EXPECTED TO COME TO INTO BEING NEXT YEAR WERE IMPROVED BY HIS VOLUNTARY WITHDRAWAL WITHDRAWAL FROM THE PRESIDENTIAL RACE (BRASILIA 6323). MAGALHAES PINTO'S PROSPECTIVE REUTN TO THEK FOLD (HOWEVER EDPEDIENT) WOULD HAVE CONSIDERABLE EFFECT ON ARENA DISSIDENTS ALL DOWN THE LINE AND MINIMIZE EULER'S CHANCES OF OBTAINING ANY MEANINGFUL NUMBER OF ARENA VOTES.

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AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 BRASILIA 6680

4. EULER'S NOMINATION NONETHELESS MARKS A TURNING POINT IN CONTEMPORARY BRAZILIAN HISTORY, NOT THE LEAST BECAUSE THE FORMAL OPPOSITION OF AN ALTERNATE MILITARY CANDIDATE TO THE REGIME'S CHOSEN SUCCESSOR IS BEING PERMITTED BY THE REGIME (INCLUDING THE ARMY HIGH COMMAND) FOR THE FIRST TIME SINCE 1964 REVOLUTION. THE COMING PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION (ALBEIT INDIRECT) WILL THUS BE THE FIRST SINCE JANIO QUADROS WAS ELECTED BY OVERWHELMING POPULAR VOTE IN 1960 IN WHICH THERE WILL BE CONTENDING PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES. REGARDLESS OF THE OUTCOME, THIS FACT ITSELF IS OF CONSIDERABLE PSYCHOLOGICAL AND POLITICAL SIGNIFICANCE AND,  
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AMONG OTHER POTENTIAL POLITICAL EFFECTS, COULD MAKE IT CONSIDERABLY MORE DIFFICULT IN THE FUTURE FOR THE REGIME (EITHER GEISEL'S OR FIGUEIREDO'S) TO SLOW, HALT OR REVERSE THE PROCESS OF POLITICAL LIBERALIZATION NOW GETTING UNDERWAY.

5. EULER DEVOTED OVER HALF OF HIS MODERATE 20-MINUTE ACCEPTANCE SPEECH TO ECONOMIC POLICY, PLEDGING EFFORTS TO CORRECT "TWO EQUALLY GRAVE DISTORTIONS": BRAZIL'S "DEPENDENCE" ON FOREIGN CAPITAL AND OVER-CONCENTRATION OF ECONOMIC POWER (THIS PORTION OF SPEECH BEING REPORTED SEPARATELY). ON THE POLITICAL SIDE, EULER PLEDGED ADHERENCE TO THE MDB'S TEN-POINT "MINIMUM PROGRAM" ADOPTED AT ITS MAY 31 CONVENTION (BRASILIA 4431) AND STATED THAT, IF ELECTED, HIS FIRST ACTION WOULD BE THE SUBMISSION TO CONGRESS OF DRAFT LEGISLATION CALLING FOR: (A) "POLITICAL AMNESTY" (HE DID NOT SPECIFY WHETHER TOTAL OR PARTIAL); (B) IMMEDIATE REINSTATEMENT OF THE 1967 CONSTITUTION (I.E., TO STRIP IT OF THE AMENDMENTS IN 1969 AND SINCE BY WHICH INSTITUTIONAL ACT NO. 5 AND SUBSEQUENT "ECEPTIONAL LEGISLATION" WERE INCORPORATED INTO IT); AND (C) THE FULL REINSTATEMENT OF A "DEMOCRATIC STATE OF LAW" THROUGH A "TRULY REPRESENTATIVE NATIONAL CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY" (WHICH, OF COURSE, HAS BEEN THE MDB'S PRINCIPAL PLATFORM PLANK SINCE LAST SEPTEMBER).

6. IN HIS PERORATION, EULER STRESSED THAT THE OCTOBER 15 PRESIDENTIAL AND NOVEMBER 15 CONGRESSIONAL ELECTIONS OFFER THE BRAZILIAN PEOPLE AN OPTION WHICH SHOULD BE TAKEN "PEACEFULLY AND LEGALLY, BECAUSE ONLY THROUGH LEGAL WAYS WILL THEY BE ABLE TO ACHIEVE POWER AND INSTALL A LEGITIMATE AND JUST DEMOCRATIC REGIME". IMMEDIATELY  
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FOLLOWING HIS JOINING THE MDB ON AUGUST 16, EULER HAD MADE A POINT OF PUBLICLY ACKNOWLEDGING THAT IN THE "ARDUOUS POLITICAL BATTLE AHEAD WE ARE PREPARED TO STRUGGLE--STRUGGLE PEACEFULLY--WITHIN THE STRICT CONFINES OF A LEGALITY WHOSE LEGITIMACY WE DO NOT RECOGNIZE". THIS WAS IN DIRECT RESPONSE TO A PUBLIC WARNING BY ARMY CHIEF OF STAFF GENERAL ARIEL PACCA, ADDRESSED TO ANYONE WHO DOES NOT UNDERSTAND THE "OBVIOUS NEED FOR A GRADUAL, ORDERLY (POLITIAL) EVOLUTION" WITHIN THE PRESENT LEGAL FRAMEWORK (SEE IR 6 809 0478 78).  
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## Message Attributes

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**Type:** TE  
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